

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - July 21, 2006

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam today announced that Lawrence “Larry” D. Remer, a San Diego political consultant, and Serafin A. Zasqueta, former President and Superintendent of Southwestern College were sentenced today in federal court in San Diego by United States District Court Judge John A. Houston to serve three years probation for violating 18, United States Code, Section 600, Promise of Benefit for Political Activity, a misdemeanor. As part of his guilty plea, each defendant agreed to pay full restitution to Southwestern Community College in the amount of \$2,945.24, pay a fine of \$5,000, and perform 100 hours of community service.

Both defendants pled guilty on May 1, 2006, to an Information charging them with illegally using public funds from the Southwestern Community College District to pay for political activity in relation to the Proposition AA Bond measure which was on the November 2000 ballot. Proposition AA was a bond measure seeking \$89 million in bonds for Southwestern College.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys AnnaLou Tirol and Paul S. Cook, who prosecuted the case, the charges stemmed from a scheme to illegally use public funds from Southwestern College to pay Murphy Putnam Media, Inc., a political consulting firm located in Alexandria, Virginia, for the production costs of a television commercial made as part of the campaign to advocate the passage of Proposition AA. According to court documents, the defendants used funds from the theater arts department at Southwestern College to pay a \$5,890.47 bill from Murphy Putnam Media, Inc., and created a false story that the money was to purchase “outtakes” from Murphy Putnam for educational and instructional purposes. United States Attorney Lam stated, “These defendants failed to hold themselves to the standard of honesty and integrity that the public expects, and the law requires.”

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 04cr2233-JAH

LAWRENCE “LARRY” D. REMER

SERAFIN A. ZASUETA

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Number of Defendants: 2

Charge: Title 18, United States Code, Section 600 - Promise of Benefit for Political Activity
Maximum Penalties: One year imprisonment; \$5,000 fine; and one year supervised release

INVESTIGATIVE AGENCY

Federal Bureau of Investigation